

CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHERS

Promoting Gender Sensitivity and Community Involvement in Schools: Participant's Manual

LEADERSHIP MODULE 3



NAME: _____

Produced and published under the USAID-funded Malawi Teacher Professional Development Support (MTPDS) Program (Contract No.: EDH-I-00-05-00026-02; Task Order No: EDH-I-04-05-00026-00) in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), Government of Malawi through the Malawi Institute of Education.

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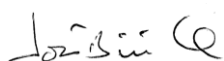
Foreword

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology introduced the Primary Curriculum and Assessment Reform (PCAR) in all primary schools in Malawi in 2007. PCAR follows an Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) approach and has great potential for improving the quality of education in the country. The OBE approach emphasizes learner-centred/participatory methods and continuous assessment. In this way, it ensures that every learner is given the attention he/she deserves in order to attain the learning outcomes.

However, the implementation and management of the reform in schools has not been without challenges since some of the elements of the reform demand that teachers develop new skills and ways of operating in order to successfully cope with the innovations in OBE. Although teachers and school managers were oriented to PCAR in general and OBE in particular, the orientation was not sufficient due to time and resource constraints. A one-off week-long orientation session to PCAR was not sufficient for teachers to be helped on how to overcome the challenges that they encounter during the implementation of the curriculum. This is partly because new challenges keep cropping up all the time in the classroom or school. In the face of reform, teachers need support all the time until they attain full mastery of the requisite skills. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) support for teachers is known to be instrumental in the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. CPD can best be provided in the zone, cluster and within the school itself.

In an effort to support the development of teachers in close collaboration with MoEST, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded the Malawi Teacher Professional Development Support (MTPDS) programme (February 2010 to March, 2013). This program is providing assistance for establishing a system for providing CPD that can be conducted in schools and clusters. The USAID-funded MTPDS program provides technical support to the MoEST by working with curriculum specialists from Malawi Institute of Education and other education professionals from various institutions to identify the specific needs of school managers and classroom teachers for Standards 1-4, with a special focus on Literacy and Leadership. In order to address the identified needs, training modules are developed in the two areas. These modules are used to train Primary Education Advisors, head teachers and CPD mentors. The head teachers and CPD mentors, in turn, use the materials to support teachers' professional development in their schools.

I sincerely hope that the school heads, CPD mentors and teachers will find the modules useful in addressing their needs to ensure that PCAR and OBE are successfully implemented. This will hopefully contribute to the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning as well as learner achievement in our schools.



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SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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Introduction to Leadership Module III

Welcome to Leadership Module III. So far, you have gone through Leadership Modules I and II. Leadership Module I introduced school leaders to the structures necessary to institutionalize a school-based CPD program. The module also provided the tools necessary for developing a CPD program in a school. Leadership Module II provided school leaders with content on some of the issues that a well-designed CPD program ought to address. Module II addressed three issues, namely, how school managers are best placed to take on instructional leadership roles, continuous assessment in the school and managing educational change. In Module III, school leaders will look at managing gender issues and mobilizing community involvement in supporting school activities.

As usual, the design of the module encourages sharing of ideas and experiences among school managers on how to manage the CPD programs in schools. The ultimate goal is to give a strong foundation in Leadership skills for managing school-based CPD programs.

It is important to mention the fact that the selected ideas and activities in this module are meant to serve as eye-openers to school managers, but not to be treated as the only ideas or activities to be used when managing CPD programs. School managers are therefore expected to create more of such ideas and activities as they design programs for instructional leadership in their schools.

School managers are advised to take note of helpful ideas and activities as they go through this module. Such ideas must be recorded in the spaces provided within and at the end of their modules. Keeping a record of ideas gained during training will make this module serve the purpose of helping managers keep track of their professional growth in instructional leadership.

Schedule

This is a suggested schedule. Adapt it according to your area's needs.

Time	Task
8:00	Registration and seating
8:30-9:45	Welcome Review of Leadership Module 2
9:45 – 10:00	Break
10:00 – 12:00	UNIT 1: Managing gender issues in the school
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00-2:30	UNIT 2: Mobilizing community involvement in supporting school activities
2:30-2:45	Break
2:45 – 3:15	UNIT 2 (continued)
3:15-3:30	Review of training and discussion
3:30	End of training

Review of Leadership Module 2

Introduction

Leadership Module 2 covered some of the roles that school leaders should play to strengthen CPD activities and improve teachers' capacity in ensuring that effective instruction and learning are taking place. Before going through the new set of content for Leadership Module 3, it is very important to have the leaders share their experiences on how knowledge gained from module 2 impacted their work as school leaders.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this activity, you should:

- Present what you have done in your schools in respect to Leadership Module 2 training
- Describe successes and challenges encountered
- Discuss how you dealt with the described challenges
- Develop plans for implementing ideas from leadership trainings.

Activity 1: Sharing experiences on implementation of ideas from Leadership Module 2

1. Individually:
 - a. Write down what you have done in your schools following your exposure to Leadership Module 2.
 - b. Identify your successes and challenges during the implementation of ideas learnt in Leadership Module 2.
2. In groups:
 - a. Share experiences on what you have done in your schools following your exposure to Leadership Module 2.
 - b. Share how you, as individual school leaders, dealt with some of the reported common challenges.
 - c. Collaboratively develop sample plans for addressing the reported common challenges.
 - d. Report your shared experiences and plans.
3. In plenary, discuss presentations from each group.
4. Individually, take note of consolidated ideas from this activity.

Activity 2: Compiling future plans

1. Individually:
 - a. Make plans for improving implementation of ideas learnt from previous leadership trainings.
 - b. Share your plans with other participants.
2. In plenary, pay attention to discussions of plans presented by fellow participants.
3. Individually, take note of consolidated responses.

Lessons from Leadership Module I & II

The onset of another year in CPD activities offers an opportunity to review how the past year went, and what we can learn from it. PEAs reported seeing delays in take-off of CPD activities in schools and clusters, owing to a number of reasons. In the space given below write down some of the issues that affected the establishment of CPD in your school:

Plans for next year

Getting started

Strengthening CPD

UNIT 1: Managing gender issues in the school

Introduction

Treating males and females equitably in the education system forms the basis for a favorable teaching and learning environment. Good education systems are those that provide structures for both male and female students to perform well and achieve their full potential.

Historically, education systems have not treated males and females equitably, resulting in gender imbalances. Such imbalances can result in problems such as sexual harassment, gender-based violence and use of abusive language. Gender disparities are inconsistent with the current goals of education systems. Gender disparities lead to broader societal problems such as low literacy rates for women, low participation of women in development activities, and fewer women leaders at local, national, and global levels. All these problems cause the disempowerment of women, which adversely affects society in various ways. School managers need to encourage gender awareness by communicating gender policies, modeling gender appropriate behavior and fostering fair treatment of both males and females. Hence, this unit discusses gender issues and their implications on teaching and learning.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meanings of different terms associated with gender
- identify gender issues that undermine effective learning of all children
- describe the effects of gender issues on teaching and learning
- explain how to deal with gender issues in your schools

Activity 1: Discussing meanings of terms associated with gender

1. Individually, write down some terms associated with gender that you are familiar with (space provided on the next page).
2. In pairs, share your understanding of the meanings of the terms.
3. In plenary, report your suggested ideas.
4. Individually, take note of consolidated responses.

Gender related terms

Gender

Gender roles

Gender issues

A gender stereotype

Gender bias

Gender equity

Gender equality

Gender balance/imbalance

Gender disparity

Gender appropriateness

Activity 2: Identifying gender issues in the schools

1. Discuss gender statistics that you were able to collect involving numbers and percentages for the following:
 - a. Female teachers in Malawi?
 - b. Female teachers, PEAs and ACCOs for a particular district?
 - c. Female DEMs in a particular division?
 - d. Female EDMs in Malawi?
2. Get into groups, and:
 - a. Analyze the following gender statistics:
 - i. female teachers in your schools or zone
 - ii. female head teachers in your zone
 - iii. ratio of boys to girls in your classroom
 - iv. ratio of boys to girls in your school
 - v. ratio of boys to girls in the most recent selection to secondary school in your school
 - vi. differences in these ratios between the most recent selection and the previous one
 - vii. differences in these ratios over the years
 - b. Write down the gender problems associated with the disparities in the statistics and their effects on teaching and learning.
 - c. Identify other gender issues and their effects on teaching and learning
3. In plenary, report your responses.
4. Individually, take note of consolidated responses.

Activity 3: Discussing ways of dealing with gender issues

1. Get into groups based on your schools or clusters, where possible and do the following:
 - a. Identify and record ways in which you can deal with gender issues in your:
 - Schools
 - Zones
 - districts (as raised in your findings)
 - b. Display your work on the walls.
 - c. Conduct a gallery walk and write down your observations.
2. In plenary, discuss your observations.
3. Take note of consolidated observations.

Gender issues, effects and strategies for dealing with them		
Gender issue	Effect	Strategies for dealing with issues
A		
B		
C		

Gender issues, effects and strategies for dealing with them		
Gender issue	Effect	Strategies for dealing with issues
D		
E		
F		
G		

Gender issues, effects and strategies for dealing with them		
Gender issue	Effect	Strategies for dealing with issues
H		

Conclusion

Some of the common gender issues prevailing in schools include sexual harassment, denial of access to facilities and biased teacher-learner interaction. Gender disparities have adverse effects on society, causing broader problems at local, national and global levels. Schools have an important role to play in addressing these problems by preparing future generations that have greater gender awareness so that they can act positively to create a better world with equal opportunities for all people. As school managers you should therefore strive to create a favorable teaching and learning environment by handling gender issues properly. You should identify and deal with these gender issues to ensure the provision of a favorable school environment.

Self-reflection

After going through this module reflect on how you dealt with gender issues before undergoing this training and thereafter think about how you will, from now on, handle gender issues in your school. Think about what you intend to do differently in your school and write down your thoughts.

Suggested INSET at the zone level

Individually identify gender issues that you would like to discuss further with other school leaders and teachers at the cluster level.

UNIT 2: Mobilizing community involvement in supporting school activities

Introduction

Educational policies highlight the importance of involving members of the community in running school affairs. Active school communities are involved in initiating school development activities, encouraging parents to send their children to school and ensuring that recommendations made by the Ministry of Education are implemented in the school. Active community participation promotes effective teaching and learning.

However, it seems that in most schools, community members neither get involved nor feel a sense of ownership of their schools. Some schools may not even have School Management Committees (SMCs) and Parents and Teachers Associations (PTAs). In some schools where SMCs and PTAs exist, these structures are noted to have limited operations. School managers need to gain knowledge and skills on how to mobilize communities to get involved in running school affairs, including supporting continuing professional development of teachers. This unit discusses the importance of community involvement and ways of mobilizing communities to support school activities.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the term ‘community involvement’
- identify common misconceptions about community participation in school affairs
- describe the roles played by different stakeholders in supporting school activities
- explain the importance of involving the community in school activities
- identify challenges to community participation in school activities
- identify solutions to the identified challenges regarding community participation
- suggest ways of mobilizing community members to gain their support for school activities
- describe the importance of using a social contract in community involvement

Activity 1: Identifying common misconceptions in community involvement

1. Individually participate in brainstorming your understanding of the term 'community involvement.'
2. As a whole group, participate in discussing the meaning of the term 'community involvement'.
3. Individually take note of the consolidated meaning of the term 'community involvement.'
4. In smaller groups, participate in thinking about previous experiences that you as leaders have had in regards to involving community members in school activities by considering the following questions:
 - a. How was the community involved?
 - b. What difference did community involvement make?
 - c. What problems were observed?
 - d. What misconceptions, if any, were observed?
 - e. How were the misconceptions addressed?
5. In plenary, participate in reporting your group responses
6. Individually take note of consolidated responses from this activity.

Meaning of the term 'community involvement'

Misconceptions about community involvement

Activity 2: Discussing the importance of involving the community in school activities

1. In groups, participate in discussing the importance of involving the community in school activities.
2. In plenary, participate in reporting your group responses.
3. Individually take note of consolidated responses for this activity.

Importance of community involvement in school activities

Community involvement in school activities is important because:

Activity 3: Identifying key stakeholders and their roles

1. In groups:
 - a. identify school stakeholders
 - b. discuss roles that the identified stakeholders play in supporting teaching and learning
 - c. suggest other roles stakeholders may play in improving teaching and learning in their schools
2. In plenary, participate in reporting your group responses.
3. Individually take note of the consolidated responses for this activity.

Key school stakeholders and their roles

Key stakeholder	Roles
A	
B	
C	
D	

Key stakeholder	Roles
E	
F	
G	
H	

Key stakeholder	Roles
J	
Other:	

Activity 4: Identifying challenges to community involvement in school activities and their solutions

1. In groups:
 - a. identify challenges to community involvement in school activities.
 - b. discuss the solutions to the challenges
2. In plenary, participate in presenting your group responses
3. Individually take note of the consolidated responses for this activity.

Challenges to community involvement in school activities include:

Some solutions to the above challenges include:

Activity 5: Identifying ways of mobilizing community members and sustaining their support for school activities

1. Individually do the following:
 - a. write down one strategy you can use to mobilize the community to participate in each of the following school activities:
 - i. improving learners' academic performance
 - ii. professional development for teachers
 - iii. infrastructure development at the school
 - b. identify ways of sustaining the support
2. In groups, compare your individually processed strategies for mobilizing communities and ways of sustaining their support and come up with one consolidated list
3. In plenary, participate in presenting your group responses
4. Individually take note of the consolidated responses

Strategies for mobilizing community members and sustaining their support for school activities

Activity 6: Discussing the importance of using a social contract in community involvement

Social Contract

In Activity 5, you may have identified signing an agreement with community members as a strategy for mobilizing community support in your school. This agreement is called a social contract, which is a negotiated agreement between parties in which roles and responsibilities are shared in order to ensure smooth running of an organization or school.

1. Read the case study below and answer the questions that follow.

Case study: Doing their part

For the first time in many years, the atmosphere at Mwanasunga Primary School was unusually positive. There was a new head teacher. The previous head teacher had left after pleading for months with the DEM's office to be posted elsewhere. He had given up on this problematic school. He alleged that the community had no interest in the school's welfare. Buildings were dilapidated, and classrooms were crowded. There were no toilets. Learners used a nearby bush as a toilet.

The new head teacher's name was Mrs. Zione Uzitha. Mrs. Uzitha started her first day by calling for a meeting with parents, chiefs, religious leaders, non-governmental organizations, representatives from government departments, and every stakeholder in the community. They gathered in the Standard Eight classroom. Mrs. Uzitha spoke to the stakeholders about the conditions at the school, and her vision for the education of the learners. She told them about the importance of working together. She told the community she respected them, and welcomed their views on how to work together and bring change to the school. She said there was need that all parties understand their role in the school and in the community. Each party had an obligation to do their part. As a school, the staff of Mwanasunga was going to dedicate themselves to improving teaching and learning at the school. On their part, parents and community leaders promised to support the school, staff and learners in their infrastructural, professional and academic needs.

As the meeting ended, expectations were high. Was everyone going to respect their part of the agreement? Was the school going to turn the corner, and forge a new era? How would the new head teacher be different from the previous one? How would the community respond to the energy brought by the new head teacher?

2. In groups, discuss the following:
 - a. Imagine that you were one of the people who attended this meeting. Out of the issues raised, what would you tackle first? Why?
 - b. What would be the roles of the following parties in tackling the issues:
 - i. Head teacher and staff?
 - ii. Learners?
 - iii. SMC?
 - iv. PTA?
 - v. Chiefs?
 - vi. Community members?
 - c. How would you ensure that each stakeholder plays his/her role(s)?
 - d. What term is used to describe such agreements?
 - e. What other situations in your community would require social contracts for facilitating school development activities?
 - f. What is the importance of using a social contract to promote community involvement in school activities?
3. In plenary, participate in presenting your group responses.
4. Individually take note of the consolidated responses.

Meaning and characteristics of a social contract in a school

Meaning of the term social contract

Importance of using a social contract in promoting community involvement in school activities

Conclusion

Primary schools in Malawi belong to communities. It is important that communities play an active role in promoting school activities, including supporting professional and academic work of the school as well as infrastructure development projects. School managers, therefore, should encourage and support the communities to participate in various development activities in order to improve the quality of education.

Self-reflection

Having gone through this unit, think about strategies that you will use to mobilize the community to support professional and academic work at your school.

Suggested INSET at the zone level

Individually think about aspects of school-community involvement that you would like to discuss further with other school managers at the cluster level.

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Notes

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